

- keeping windows and lights clear. Remove all ice and snow from your vehicle before driving;
- starting out very slowly, then testing your brakes gently to find out how well you can stop. Start slowing down long before you come to an intersection or turn;
- keeping your gas tank and windshield fluid reservoir full;
- keeping an emergency kit in your vehicle that contains:
 - flares;
 - flashlight and batteries;
 - first aid kit;
 - blanket;
 - kitty litter or sand (for traction on snow/ice);
 - small shovel and ice scraper;
 - using chains, snow tires or radial tires on designated snow emergency routes when a snow emergency is declared.

Remember: Ramps and bridges freeze first before highways and roads. Also, plowed roads may refreeze at night or have icy patches from the daylight thawing of snow.

Four-wheel drive vehicles can also slide on ice and snow. Four-wheel drive improves maneuverability, but driving on snow or ice is always dangerous and always unpredictable. Drivers should exercise extreme caution at all times.

E. Skidding

Traction or adhesion is the grip between the tires and the road surface that allows a vehicle to start, stop and/or change direction. Traction between the tires and the road does not remain constant. For example,

sand, gravel, uneven road surfaces, oil slicks/spills, increased speed or water on the road decreases the level of traction. The possibility of skidding or sliding increases with decreased traction.

In the event that your vehicle does begin to skid, it is important to know what to do in order to regain control of your vehicle as quickly as possible. Basic rules include:

- release the accelerator or brake pedal, whichever is being applied, to regain vehicle balance;
- steer in the direction of the skid;
- look where you want the vehicle to go;
- apply brake pressure only after rolling traction has been reestablished;
- slowly accelerating may aid in recovery from loss of rear wheel traction.

F. Hydroplaning

As vehicle speed increases and the amount of water on the roadway increases, vehicles tend to ride on a cushion of water and the tires lose contact with the road. This is called “hydroplaning.” Hydroplaning can cause partial or complete loss of control of the vehicle. To prevent hydroplaning, maintain your tires in good condition, and lower your speed in response to wet roads. If you detect a loss of control, take your foot off the gas, do not apply the brakes, maintain the direction of the vehicle, and allow the vehicle to slow to a manageable speed.

G. Highway-Railroad Crossings



Remember, trains cannot stop quickly. Extra caution should be used when traveling over railroad crossings.